Training and Visit of Agricultural Extension Units

3722. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware about the lack of commitment on the part of some State Governments in following the programmes under the reorganised agricultural extension projects on Training and Visit approach which had recently been introduced in 17 States?

(b) whether Government arealso aware of the base-l; who are stagnating for decades

(c) whether World Bank had recently given its recommendations on extension cadre management, ond if so, what are the details thereof?

"HE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) The re-organized extension system on 'Training and Visit' approach has been introduced in 17 States in country. The progress of implementation of these State Sector Projects and the qualify of functioning of the System have not been uniform in all the States. In some of the States the pace of implementation has been slow mainly due to paucity of financial resources and procedural $delay_3$ in the recruitment and placement of personnel and construction of civil works. However, there is no indication that there is any lack of commitment on their part in following the 'Training and Visit' approach extension system or they want to discontinue it.

(b) While there are adequate pro-motioaafal avenue for village Extension Workers in some States, there is stagnation at their level in the remaining States due to inadequate promotion opportunities.

(c) The World Bank had sponsored a_n internal consultancy study of the extension cadre management problems in the States. The recommendations -emerged out of that study were considered by the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India. Important recommendations suggested to the State Governments for consideration, implementation are given below: —

(i) There is an acute stagnation among the extension staff, which at some levels, is as much as 20 to 35 years. Immediate steps are needed for removing the stagnation particularly in the cadre of Village Extension Wo'rkers. Selection grade needi to be provided for those who cannot get promotion for 10 years;

(ii) The build and maintain tho morale of extension staff and encourage them to perform better, adequate incentives need to be given to outstanding workers. This could be achieved through giving merit promotions, advance increments and other methods of recognition;

(iii) For effective performance of field duties extension staff needs to be made fully mobile. It is essential therefore, to provide mopedes to the VEWs and motor-cycles to AEOs;

(iv) Effectiveness of extension depends upon technical competence of the VEWs. It is necessary that the minimum qualification to be possessed by the candidates for 'recruitment as VEWs should be a diploma in Agriculture after SSC/ SSLC;

(v) There are a large number of non-graduates in the extension cadre. It is necessary to provide promotional avenues for them without diluting technical competence. Urgent and effective steps are, therefore, required to be taken for enabling non-graduates to acquire qualifications equivalent to B. Sc. (Agriculture);

(vi) National Commission on Agriculture has recommended that B. Sc.

(Agriculture) degree should be re-coginsed on a par with those oil medical, engineering and veterinary disciplines. Now that most of the States have switched over from 3 to 4 years B. Sc. (Agriculture) degree course, it should be possible to make out a 6trong case for parity of agricultural staff with other technical cadres;

(vii) Even where functional separation at State level becomes necessary and separate Departments/ Directorates of Horticulture, Social Forestry, Soil Conservation, etc., are set up, field level extension system for the farmers should be through a single line extension system only. It would be prohibitively expensive for parallel lines of extension to be established by each of these Departments;

(viii) There is need for direct recruitment at Class II and Class I level which should be through competitive examination;

(ix) There is need for a more decentralised system of writing annual assesment reports, constitution of departmental promotion committees, the powers to make appointments and transfers and other staff matters;

(x) To ensure a fair system of recruitment for non-gazetted staff, the recruitment should be on the basis of marks in the written qualifying examinations rather than interviews alone.

Sanction of Oilseeds Projects

3723. SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Rs. 170 crore project for oilseeds has been cleared by 3overnment as appeared in the 'Economic Times' of 29th October, 1987 and if so, what are the details thereof;

(b) whether the National Oilseeds Development Project (NODP) will un on the dines of the NDDB; and

(c) whether vegetable oil work of the NDDB is proposed to be transferred to the NODP to ensure that both oilseeds and milk programme get maximum attention?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government of India has approved the implementation of National Oilseeds Development Project (NODP) in 180 selected districts of 17 oilseeds growing States with an outlay of Rs. 170 crores, of which the Central share is Rs. 100 crores during the Seventh Plan period. The project provides financial assistance to the States on various critical inputs like multiplication and supply of improved seeds, provision for plant protection, measures, improved farm implements supply, organising large sized block demonstrations, etc.

(b) No. Sir. The emphasis and approach of NODP and NDDB are different. They work complementarity to each other. NDDB's emphasis is on offering price incentive, market support system and processing through co-operation movement whereas technology transfer and inputs distribution are done through the States Extension System. On the other hand NODP is basically one of the schemes implemented through the State Agri-culture Department with the emphasis on activities, such as, the technology transfer and inputs supply system While the underlying objective is to increase oilseeds production and Productivity of the farmers, the emphasis is on different components.

(c) The activities of NDDB on the oilseeds front have not in any way affected the milk production programmes undertaken by them and in view of the details provided at (b) above, no needs has been felt to transfer the vegetable oil work of NDDB to NODP.